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SENATE

{ REPORT
No. 971

EMERGENCY MAIL SERVICE IN ALASKA

FEBRUARY 2, 1925.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. STERLING, from the Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads,
submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 6581]

The Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, having had under consideration the bill (H. R. 6581) authorizing the Postmaster General to provide emergency mail service in Alaska, reports the same back to the Senate with the recommendation that the bill do pass without amendment.

In explanation of the need for this legislation, the following is quoted from the report of the Committee on the Post Office and Post Roads of the House (H. Rept. 582):

The appropriation for the transportation of mail in Alaska for the last fiscal year was \$185,000, with the following proviso:

“Provided, That out of this appropriation the Postmaster General is authorized to provide difficult or emergency mail service in Alaska, including the establishment and equipment of relay stations, in such manner as he may think advisable, without advertising therefor.”

Under this proviso, in the last fiscal year \$79,000 was expended, and the expenditure is explained in the testimony of the representative of the Post Office Department who appeared before the subcommittee at a hearing recently held:

“We have this temporary service from time to time for the movement of the mail, and our representative in Alaska, when possible, secures bids from people who are in position to handle the mail, so we have more or less competition under this provision. We make our authorizations usually for the period of the particular service. Sometimes it runs two or three months. Ordinarily, our service in Alaska is under a four-year contract, and when we can get a permanent service, we will then put it under a regular contract form.

“Mr. SCHNEIDER. What are the particular reasons for you not contracting for that service in the same way there as elsewhere?”

“Mr. TRIEM. Usually it comes up under emergency conditions, where we have to move mails on short notice.

“Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mail comes irregularly, because of the seasonal conditions?”

“Mr. TRIEM. Seasonal conditions up there; yes. The mail sometimes accumulates at some point in Alaska, waiting for the ice to break on the rivers, and we have to move the mail as soon as we can under this emergency proposition.

“Mr. MOORE. What is the chief object of the legislation?”

"Mr. TRIEM. Simply to avoid its repetition from year to year. That is the only object we have in introducing it.

"Mr. MOORE. In other words, there is no necessity for repeating what we have been doing for several years.

"Mr. TRIEM. This particular item has appeared in our annual appropriation act since 1901. From year to year it is simply repeated. It also appears in the 1925 appropriation law. That was the only object we had, to save that repetition in the appropriation acts.

"Mr. KENDALL. You ask for \$185,000, do you?

"Mr. TRIEM. It is \$180,000 for the 1925 appropriation.

"Mr. MOORE. This bill does not carry anything. It is to make it a permanent law, and the money will be provided in the annual appropriations for the Postal Service?

"Mr. KENDALL. This is to make the law permanent now?

"Mr. TRIEM. That is the object; yes, sir.

"Mr. MOORE. It would not appropriate any particular amounts.

"Mr. KENDALL. You simply avoid the repetition from year to year."

